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827 P98

Mr. Runch



Univ. of Mich.



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MR PUNCH
his ORIGIN & CAREER
with a
FAC-SIMILE of his MS PROSPECTUS
IN THE HANDWRITING of
MARK LEMON
LONDON

BY APPOINTMENT TO THE HON. BOARD OF ORDNANCE.



ESTABLISHED 1756.



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on from well to be formed
to

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SOUTH KENSINGTON
AND
WEST BROMPTON.

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FAMILY RESIDENCES,
SHOPS AND STABLING,

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[SEE NEXT PAGE.]

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REDCLIFFE ESTATE,

SOUTH KENSINGTON.

MESSRS. CORBETT & MCCLYMOND,

BUILDERS,

2^a, REDCLIFFE GARDENS,

FULHAM ROAD, WEST BROMPTON, S.W.,

BEG TO CALL ATTENTION TO THE

SUBSTANTIAL FAMILY RESIDENCES

THEY HAVE ERECTED IN

REDCLIFFE SQUARE,

CALLED

“REDCLIFFE MANSIONS,”

FROM DRAWINGS SUPPLIED BY THE WELL-KNOWN ARCHITECTS,

MESSRS. G. & H. GODWIN.

The elevation is carried out after the French style, with mansard roofs and polished granite columns to the entrance porches.

The fronts of the Mansions overlook the Square, which is laid out as pleasure-grounds for the recreation of the occupants only.

Arrangements have been made for the erection of a large Church in the Western half of Redcliffe Square. An Iron Building for temporary accommodation will be used whilst the *Church is being built.*

MR. PUNCH:

1888
HIS ORIGIN AND CAREER.

WITH A

FACSIMILE OF HIS ORIGINAL PROSPECTUS,

IN THE HANDWRITING OF

MARK LEMON.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY JAS. WADE, TAVISTOCK STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.

MR. PUNCH:

HIS ORIGIN AND CAREER.

Punch, for so many years the most popular of English periodicals, has reached a sad landmark in life. It has lost Mark Lemon. Its ablest contributors have fallen one after another, and now the editor has followed—the editor to whose ability, taste and discretion *Punch* owes so much of its success.

Among his colleagues there is and has been but one view of the value of his services. A far wider circle knew his

amiable qualities as a friend. And the public generally had a high appreciation of the powers which he so largely exercised for their amusement and instruction.

Not only in the pages of *Punch* was Mark Lemon a worker. In the fields of fiction, descriptive and dramatic, he cultivated flowers and fruits; and in byways of literature innumerable he made the paths pleasant with bright fancies and genial ideas. It is, however, as the editor of *Punch* that his name is most generally known.

The loss of Mark Lemon recalls days that are gone, long, long ago. *Punch* is now in his thirtieth year, and thirty years ago he was not thought of. A great many things have since come to pass that were not thought of then—in History, in Science, and in Art, as well as in Literature.

Thirty years ago Napoleon III. was a heavy-looking young man, living in London, not much in the most exclusive society, but a great deal at such places as Count d'Orsay's and Lady Blessington's—far from well off, and, scandal says, inclined to the borrowing of those compact sums of money, which seem made on purpose to be borrowed, from his good-natured friends. His wife, who is now (August, 1870) ruling France in his name, was then a very young lady living in Spain, and known to the few who knew her as Madlle. de Montijo. The sovereign against whom the Emperor is in arms was then a harmless prince, with the Prussian throne only looming in the future. Count Bismarck, if not unknown to fame, had no promise of establishing what Mr. Carlyle calls "a relation to the universe." Queen Victoria was our popular young Queen, of whom the nation was forming the highest hopes—destined, happily, to be realised. She was very newly married, and Prince

Albert was the happiest prince of his time. Her favourite minister was still Lord Melbourne, who was destined, however, soon to fall before Peel; and people

... of the Tory leader's defeat, on the threshold of power, by the "Bed-chamber r... Israeli was writing novels, and only d... of Parliamentary fame; and Mr. Gladstone was an orthodox Tory and High Churchman, taking his views of political life from the Carlton Club.

Among political things not thought of, in the sense of not being expected, was Free Trade; for the Whigs, at any rate, were content to cry for a moderate fixed duty upon corn, and cared comparatively little about other articles. And we may surely include in the category of unexpected things, a new Reform Act based upon Household Suffrage, with so liberal an interpretation of the term as to include lodgers. Thirty years ago, too,

were days when "Gladstone" claret—had anybody been so foolish as to import it—would have cost as much as Chateau Margaux costs in 1870. Those were days when railway communication was far from being general, and the electric telegraph was but a dream of science. Photography was still in its infancy, and was generally called Daguerreotype. *Cartes de visite* were entirely unknown; the features of your friends were shadowed upon a metallic surface, and you had to coquette with them a great deal in the light before they would let you see them, and even then only in a slanting kind of way.

And one change of especial importance to such publications as *Punch* had not come to pass thirty years ago. "The Taxes on Knowledge," as they were called, were in force, and seemed little likely to be abolished. There was a heavy stamp duty upon newspapers, apart from postal

privileges, a heavy tax upon advertisements, and a heavy excise duty upon paper.

Having taken a glance at contemporary times, we will pass to the progenitors of Mr. Punch, and the curiosity that has been attracted from time to time to the circumstances of his advent.

When a man rises in the world friends come as matters of course, and relations appear with equal punctuality. No cousinship can be too remote for the claim of kindred; the most "distant" connections become near and familiar. The social sunshine brings them out like bees or butterflies; and whether on business or on pleasure bound, they are Parsees in their worship of the rising luminary. A man never knows how many relatives he has until he becomes successful in life; then he has friends for the asking, and persons who have ever rendered him a

service take especial delight in reminding him of their existence. Moreover, if he achieve renown, he is certain to find the curiosity of the public gratified by all kinds of contradictory stories concerning his origin and family.

Mr. Punch has for many years been a prosperous gentleman in the world of comic literature. If he did not found he certainly established a school of current wit and humour, which employed in its teachings the pencil as well as the pen. He has made a name and a fame, has held his own bravely during a long literary life, and has incurred the usual penalties of success. He has made friends and he has made enemies; he has been written up and he has been written down; he has been flattered and he has been bullied; he has inspired rivalry in his own field; he has been "gossipped" about to any extent in contemporary writings; and as a natural consequence he has heard a great deal more



about himself than ever came within his own knowledge. He has had many claimants to relationship in the form of persons declaring themselves contributors to his columns; for there are dozens of idle men fluttering about in society of one kind or another, who never published a line in their lives, but have established a reputation among credulous friends for "writing the best things in *Punch*." He has heard a great deal in particular about his birth and parentage, concerning which there seems to be some misconception abroad. It is mainly to place upon record the few facts connected with the origin of our representative jester that these pages are written.

The questions involved may not be of very great importance. But as it is well known that "future Macaulays" will explore all the byways of literature like so many *chiffoniers*, and include the humblest material they can collect for the process

of sifting, it is as well to throw a little accuracy in their way, and we make our contribution accordingly. We can fancy the "coming man" among the historians groping in forgotten ways with his hooked stick and his basket, and lighting at last upon this little publication as the reward of his industry.

A favourite story of the literary gossipers who have made Mr. Punch their subject from time to time is, that he was born in a tavern parlour. The idea usually presented to the public is, that a little society of great men used to meet together in a private room in a tavern close to Drury Lane Theatre—the Crown Tavern in Vinegar-yard, "not to put too fine a point upon it." That these great men—who belonged to the witty and facetious form of greatness—were in the habit of saying so many clever things to one another, and becoming generally such ornaments to society, that they found it

necessary to enlarge their sphere, and publish the results of their reciprocated inspiration. Hence, we have been frequently told, came *Punch*—the natural effusion of a fount which rose till it would no longer bear restraint, and caused the previously pent-up wit and humour to pour upon the public. Another story recited similar circumstances, but changed the locality of the tavern to Wych-street, in the Strand. The idea as regards both these houses of entertainment is a delusion, caused by the association of facts which had in reality nothing to do with one another. There were certain gatherings of a convivial character in the localities referred to before the starting of *Punch*, as there were after; some of the early contributors to *Punch*, literary and artistic, used to attend them; and a great deal of the fun for which *Punch* became famous was doubtless fostered at these meetings. Mr. George Hodder, in his pleasant work called *Memories of My Time*, has recently

told us much about the meetings of the "sets" referred to, which included some of the future writers of *Punch*, but were composed for the most part of men who were never connected with the jester; and Mr. Hodder confirms our assertion that *Punch* was *not* born in a tavern parlour. He came into the world in rather a business-like way than otherwise, and under circumstances which may be briefly set forth.

In the year 1841 there was a printing-office in a court running out of Fleet-street—No. 3, Crane-court—wherein was carried on the business of Mr. Joseph William Last, who is now established not far from the same spot. It was here that Mr. Punch first saw the light, and here that the circumstances matured which led to his birth. The house, by the way, enjoys, besides, a distinction of a different kind—that of being the birthplace of "Parr's Life Pills." For Mr. Herbert Ingram, who had not at

that time launched the *Illustrated London News*, nor become a Member of Parliament, was then introducing that since celebrated medicine to the public, and for that purpose had rented some rooms on the premises of his friend Mr. Last.

Mr. Ingram's landlord, it may be here remarked, was one of the earliest promoters of cheap illustrated literature, and one from whom the future proprietor of the *Illustrated London News* might well have obtained some suggestive ideas. As far back as 1834, Mr. Last had been the printer and proprietor of several publications, circulating their tens of thousands weekly, and enjoying a remarkable degree of success for those times, when the mass of the people were but beginning to read. Even at that early date he had the reputation of possessing as extensive a knowledge of the machinery and practical working of the printing business as any man of his time. He was one of the

first printers who executed the finer kinds of printing—that of illustrated works, for instance—with a cylinder machine, which had hitherto been supposed unfitted for the nice requirements of woodcut-printing. The successful manner in which the cylinder printing-machine was made to apply to *Punch* may, it has been suggested, have given to Mr. Ingram the idea of his great pictorial speculation. Indeed, Mr. Ingram consulted Mr. Last upon the practicability of printing, upon the required conditions, a large sheet like that of the *Illustrated News*, and there is good reason to believe that the opinion given, backed up by the experience of the case of *Punch*, considerably influenced Mr. Ingram in embarking upon the venture. Certain it is that the *Illustrated News* was started shortly afterwards, and that Mr. Last reprinted the early numbers of that paper with the same machinery which he had erected for the printing of *Punch*. He was afterwards engaged as the managing printer of the

Illustrated News, and for a considerable time acted in that capacity.

But to return to Mr. Punch. The circumstance which led to his birth was simple enough. In June, 1841, Mr. Last called upon Mr. Alfred Mayhew, then in the office of his father, Mr. Joshua Mayhew, the late well-known solicitor of Carey-street, Lincoln's-inn-fields. Mr. Mayhew was Mr. Last's legal adviser, and Mr. Last was well acquainted with several of his sons. Upon the occasion in question Mr. Last made some inquiries of Mr. Alfred Mayhew concerning his brother Henry, and his occupations at the time. Mr. Henry Mayhew had, even at his then early age, a reputation for the high abilities which he afterwards developed, had already experience in various departments of literature, and had exercised his projective and inventive faculties in various ways. If his friends had heard nothing of him for a few months they usually

found that he had a new design in hand, which was, however, in many cases of a more original than practical character. Mr. Henry Mayhew, as it appeared from his brother Alfred's reply, was not at that time engaged in any new effort of his creative genius, and would be open to a proposal for active service.

Having obtained Mr. Henry Mayhew's address, which was in Clement's-inn, Mr. Last called upon that gentleman on the following morning, and opened to him a proposal for a comic and satirical journal. Henry Mayhew readily entertained the idea, and the next question was, "Can you get up a staff?" Henry Mayhew mentioned his friend Mark Lemon as a good commencement; and the pair proceeded to call upon that gentleman, who was living not far off—in Newcastle-street, Strand. They saw him on the same day. Mr. Lemon entered readily into their views, and suggested the names of seven

ral contributors and artists, with whom Messrs. Mayhew and Lemon promised to communicate. An engraver was wanted, and Mr. Last proposed to apply to his old friend Mr. Ebenezer Landells, who had already been engaged with him in several enterprises. There was another meeting next day, held this time at the Edinburgh Castle, in the Strand—so that it appears that a tavern, after all, had an incidental connection with the new periodical—at which several of the proposed collaborators attended—notably, Douglas Jerrold, Henry Mayhew, Henry Baylis, George Hodder, Stirling Coyne, Ebenezer Landells, William Newman, and Archibald Henning. It does not appear, however, that either Mr. Baylis or Mr. Hodder was present in the character of intending contributors, though both gave incidental assistance; and Mr. Hodder mentions in his *Memories* a particular instance in which he exhibited his zeal in the cause. Several literary contributors who did not attend

the meeting were also "booked" as contributors—certainly three, Mr. Gilbert à Beckett, Mr. W. H. Wills, and Mr. H. P. Grattan. Mr. Henning was to be the principal artist, and in association with him and Mr. Newman were Mr. Brine and Mr. Phillips.

The staff, as represented at the meeting, was thus incomplete, even as regarded the arrangements then made; but a draft of the prospectus had been already prepared, and was duly read by Mr. Lemon, in whose handwriting it was drawn up. A facsimile of the document is appended to this publication. It will be seen by the erasure and correction here exhibited that the original intention was to call the publication *The Fun*—at least, such is the appearance presented. But we believe that the intended title was only written in part when the erasure was made, and that, entire, it would have stood as *The Funny Dog*. The idea of Punch as

an individual evidently pervades the prospectus, while the allusion to "Funny Dogs with Comic Tales" in the body of the document, while involving no inconsistency with the name of *Punch*, gives confirmation to the belief as to the original intention.

The origin of the name eventually adopted is stated, on good authority, to be this:—The idea of an English representative of the Paris *Charivari* was adopted from the first, and the subsidiary title of *The London Charivari* agreed upon. When the prospectus was first read and discussed at a meeting held at Mr. Last's printing-office, at which Mark Lemon, Henry Mayhew, Stirling Coyne and others were present, reference was made to the ingredients of the beverage punch, suggested by a jocose allusion to the name of Lemon. Henry Mayhew at once seized the idea, and said—"A good thought—we'll call it *Punch*." Some conversation then took

place concerning a periodical called *The Penny Punch*, which, years before, Douglas Jerrold had edited for Mr. Duncombe, of Middle-row, Holborn; but it was generally agreed that the previous use of the title in this form would not operate as an objection, and the new name was carried by acclamation.

The upshot of the meetings held on the subject was an agreement that the proprietorship of the publication should be divided, in equal shares, between four persons—Messrs. Last, Landells, Lemon, and Mayhew. Last was to supply the printing, Landells the engraving, Lemon and Mayhew were to be co-editors.

Mr. Hodder, in the work already referred to, tells us that he first heard of the project from Henry Mayhew, on whose part he undertook to communicate with several of the writers subsequently engaged. In casting about for contributors,

Mr. Mayhew suggested one who was a personal stranger to him, and known only by his *nom-de-plume* of "Paul Prendergast," under which name he had written a work of admirable humour, called *The Comic Latin Grammar*. The first difficulty was to discover his identity in private life, but this was overcome without much delay, and the author of *The Comic Latin Grammar* was found to be Mr. Percival Leigh, a medical man by profession, if not practice, residing in Chapel-place, Oxford-street. Upon Mr. Leigh Mr. Hodder promptly made a call, and found him busy at his desk, engaged in the work with which he followed up *The Comic Latin Grammar*—namely, *The Comic English Grammar*. Mr. Hodder opened his business—no doubt with diplomatic suavity, although he does not say so much for himself—and Mr. Leigh met him, as we may suppose, in a similar spirit. But Mr. Leigh, stranger as he was, did not give his adhesion there and then to the

cause. He did not know the nature of the publication, wished to see what it was like, and would prefer not to decide until he had made its acquaintance. Mr. Hodder, however, was satisfied that his co-operation would be secured, and the idea proved to be well founded.

The slight delay which took place brought an unexpected stroke of good fortune upon *Punch*. It introduced the projectors to no less a person than John Leech. This gentleman had been the illustrator of the *Comic Latin Grammar*, and was the personal friend of its author. After the interview with Mr. Hodder, Mr. Leigh proceeded to Mr. Leech, and asked his advice as to the new speculation. The result was that both gentlemen gave in their adhesion. Their first contributions, it may be here noted, appeared in the fourth number, consisting of a page illustration called "Foreign Affairs," by Mr. Leech, and an article upon the subject

(treated in both cases from a Leicester-square point of view), by Mr. Leigh. It was through Mr. Leech, by the way, that Albert Smith was afterwards brought into the periodical—they had been intimate friends while both were studying medicine “about town.”

Reverting for a moment to the name of *Punch*, we should not omit to notice that Mr. Hodder mentions, that when Henry Mayhew first told him of the project, he referred to it by that name, stating at the same time the nature of the design—a version of the French *Charivari*.

The arrangements once concluded appear to have been vigorously carried out, for the first number of *Punch*, or the *London Charivari*, appeared in the following month—on the 17th of July, 1841. The pictorial cover was drawn by Archibald Henning, who also furnished the page illustration—the first of a series continued

for a long time under the head of "Punch's Pencillings." The minor sketches scattered through the columns are by Newman and Brine. The principal literary contributions were by Mark Lemon, Henry Mayhew, Gilbert à Beckett, Stirling Coyne, W. H. Wills, and H. P. Grattan.

The first number was no exception to first numbers generally—it gave little idea of the strength and attractiveness of its elements as displayed after a few weeks' trial, to say nothing of its subsequent development. But it contained a great deal of clever writing, and its style and tone were thoroughly original—to an extent that can scarcely be credited by those whose recollection does not carry them beyond the pre-*Punch* period of comic literature. The light writing of the time was contained mainly in the monthly magazines, price half-a-crown. It was admirable of its kind, and supplied to a considerable extent by the best writers of

the day ; but the form of publication precluded the effective treatment of passing topics, and the weekly wit could "march round" the monthly one, and capture his best materials. Moreover, the principal writers of *Punch*—those who took up that position and formed the character of the journal—had all strong individual qualities, curiously diverse, and each thoroughly his own ; and their school of jocularitv was decidedly a new one.

But originality is a dangerous game to play with the public as an opponent ; and nobody knows this fact better than projectors of periodicals. It takes a long time to turn the public mind to a new direction, however much "to the point" that direction may be. You have to catch readers first, and then to keep them—to attract and then to convince. A few admirers may always be found for literature of real merit, in whatever department it be, and whatever new ground it may take up. But

the majority of people do not judge for themselves. They think in masses, and they read in masses, and, as a natural consequence, they pay in masses also. It takes a long time to make a periodical known, and a still longer time to make it trusted ; and originality is an obstruction in the beginning, though it may make a fortune for its possessors in the end. If the idea be really a good one, the policy is to persevere, and carry it out at all cost. Everybody has not the means to do this, and the consequence is the failure of a great many publications that ought to succeed.

Punch took up new ground, and was nearly falling a victim to the want of means to keep it. The first number, though not equal in merit even to its immediate successors, teemed with wit and humour, conceived in the happiest of veins ; and it professed, moreover, a purpose scarcely hinted at in the jesting prospectus

which had introduced it to the world. The first article in the first number is a deliberate avowal of the principles of the periodical, pointedly put, but saying what was evidently meant. It was, in fact, of the "merry and wise" character which *Punch* has maintained with so much success. Its merriment has flagged occasionally, and its wisdom has not been very conspicuous in some of its attacks upon individuals. But it has carried out its professions with consistency on the whole, while its social tone has immensely improved. But it was too new an idea not to have up-hill work at the outset; and this fact soon became manifest.

Punch made a strong impression upon the public. It was considered a wonder in current literature. Nothing so pretentious in form and material had ever been published at so low a price. It was quoted much by the press, and excited proportionate interest in society. But

when the accounts were examined from week to week, it was found that the number of its supporters was not enough to support it. It was quite clever enough—there was no question upon that point among printer, publisher, authors, or artists. But it was an unfortunate fact that the cash received by Mr. Bryant, the publisher, for the copies sold at the office (No. 3, Wellington-street, Strand) were insufficient to meet the expenses incurred. Still all concerned went manfully on. Some made sacrifices, in hopes of the day of success—which they knew would come sooner or later—being then at hand. But the expenses were necessarily large, and the profits, it must be remembered, were smaller than they are in these days of cheap paper, cheap advertising, and cheap circulation. The loss in actual outlay was borne by Mr. Last, although that gentleman, as we have seen, held only a fourth share in the proprietorship; and when he had sunk more than six hundred pounds

in this manner, and incurred still further liabilities, he could do no more, and it was agreed that the only chance for the new venture was to find somebody to buy it.

It was at this juncture that Messrs. Bradbury and Evans determined to try their fortune with the periodical. They were an enterprising firm, but were not prepared to make any extensive investment in the way of purchase-money ;' and ultimately Mr. Last consented to make over the "property" to them, upon consideration of receiving the amount of the still outstanding liabilities. The money was thereupon paid, and the Whitefriars potentates took possession of *Punch*.

At the transfer, the services of the other proprietors, Messrs. Lemon, Mayhew, and Landells, were retained, as well as those of Messrs. Jerrold, à Beckett, Leigh, Leech, and some others. But several of the early

writers and artists remained only temporarily with the journal. Mr. Henning and Mr. Newman both retired—the latter for a lucrative engagement in New York, where, we believe, he still flourishes. Mr. Coyne and Mr. Grattan were but casual contributors, and that but for a short time. Mr. Wills's connection with the journal did not last very long after it passed into the hands of Messrs. Bradbury and Evans. But the most important changes which took place soon after the transfer to Whitefriars, were the secession of Messrs. Mayhew and Landells, on account of personal differences, which need not be explained here. After Mr. Mayhew's departure Mr. Lemon became the sole editor of *Punch*, and held that position until his death, a few weeks ago. Mr. à Beckett, for reasons which do not appear, was less constant in his contributions shortly after the paper passed into the hands of Messrs. Bradbury and Evans; and during that period he edited, for Mr.

Last, a little publication called *The Squib*—he could not, apparently, exist without a comic journal. But the cause, whatever it was, soon ceased to exist, and à Beckett returned to the other connection, which he continued for the rest of his life—proving to the world that a man may have light comedy in his nature and yet make a very excellent police magistrate.

One of the earliest accessions to the literary columns was that of Mr. Horace Mayhew, who, returning from a tour in Germany, at once became a contributor. He was eventually appointed sub-editor under Mark Lemon, who always bore hearty testimony to the value of his assistance. But in course of time it appeared to the zealous subordinate that his services were superfluous if the editor did his own work; so he resigned the appointment. But the gay and genial spirit of Horace Mayhew was

not lost to *Punch*, and has ever since pervaded its pages. Many humorous and sparkling things he has written in them, notably the Model Men, Women, and Children.

Mr. Hine, the artist, joined *Punch* about three months after its commencement, and proved a valuable addition to the staff. He remained with it for some years, but eventually abandoned drawing on wood, and confined himself to canvas, under which he is sailing, we believe, pleasantly before the wind. Among other artists who came and went, besides Newman, who stayed with the paper for a considerable time after it was taken up by Bradbury and Evans, were Birket Foster, Alfred Crowquill, Lee, Hamerton, John Gilbert, William Harvey, and Kenny Meadows. Several of these were confessedly unsuited for the illustration of *Punch's* peculiar humour; but Kenny Meadows's connection endured for a considerable time, and

the illustrator of *Shakspeare* illustrated therein some of Douglas Jerrold's earliest continued works—notably *Punch's Letters to his Son*. It is curious, by the way, to notice that the second of this series is headed *Epistles of Punch to his Son*, and that the original title is resumed in the third number.

Under the potential auspices—by which we mean, of course, the command of capital—of Bradbury and Evans, *Punch*, after a little more fluttering, entered into a steady course of prosperity. It published an almanack at the end of 1841, as it has continued to do at the end of each succeeding year. The first was funny enough, but by no means so ornate in illustration as those to which *Punch* has since accustomed the public. It was “composed” to a great extent, we are told, in the Fleet Prison, where Dr. Maginn had then a temporary residence. Dr. Maginn, it may be here mentioned, had contributed more

or less to the journal almost from its commencement; but we are not aware that he was in the Fleet all the time. Perhaps we should not have noticed the unpleasant fact that he was there at all, had not Thackeray drawn the immortal picture of him in durance vile, in the character of Captain Shandon, writing the prospectus of the *Pall Mall Gazette*—not the *Pall Mall Gazette* which is always changing its size and price, but the one which had so consistent an existence in the hands of Messrs. Penderfuss and Warrington, Mr. Finucane, and other distinguished literary gentlemen of their time.

Albert Smith joined *Punch* in time to commence his "Physiology of the London Medical Student," at the beginning of October, 1841. Meanwhile Douglas Jerrold was proceeding with that powerful series of articles which he signed "Q." There were great jokes in the early numbers about Lord Melbourne, whose official

life was then on its last legs; and the jester, with precocious sagacity, was paying compliments to Sir Robert Peel at the expense of the Whig Premier. Perhaps he was respectful to Peel merely as a slight to Melbourne, perhaps he was worshipping the rising sun, perhaps he instinctively perceived the tendency of Peel towards a Liberal policy. The motive does not much matter; but *Punch* would not let Lord Melbourne alone, even for dining at the Palace, and many among us remember that there was a joke upon that score against the genial Whig statesman, similar to the banter about Prince Christian in these later days—except that Prince Christian is usually accused of lunching instead of dining with Her Majesty when he calls at Windsor Castle.

Gilbert à Beckett at the same time was beginning to make fun about Mr. Briefless. This unhappy member of the bar made his first appearance in the third number

of *Punch*, and his life lasted as long as the life of his inventor. A Beckett must have revelled in the jocularities suggested by the struggles of Briefless. Who among the early readers of *Punch* does not remember Mr. Briefless's proverbs, including such aphorisms as, "As my laundress refuses to make my bed, so must I lie upon it." Also the picture of Mr. Briefless's clerk "bringing his master's grey horsehair wig down in sorrow to the court." And again, at a political crisis, when Mr. Briefless, upon hearing of the resignation of the ministry, proceeds to London from his lodgings in Gravesend, in order to be ready for any contingency that might arise, and finding that the only contingency which does arise is the presentation of his tailor's bill, a contingency which he is quite unprepared to meet, retires once more to his lodgings at Gravesend.

Mr. Briefless's ministry, which he is prepared to submit to Her Majesty in the

event of being "sent for," is also a grand selection. It includes, we remember, his friend Mr. Dunup, as Chancellor of the Exchequer; Mr. Widdicomb, of Astley's, as Master of the Horse; and Mr. Baron Nathan, the dancing-master, as Lord Chamberlain. The accommodation bill between Mr. Briefless and Mr. Dunup is also strongly characteristic of à Beckett's peculiar humour. The two friends, he tells us, had quarrelled, but become reconciled; and "their reconciliation received its true stamp in the shape of a bill-stamp, which was adorned with one of Mr. Briefless's characteristic drawings, and accepted in the same spirit in which it was tendered by Mr. Dunup."

Some pleasant reminiscences of his brother Gilbert have been left by the Hon. T. T. à Beckett, an official in Australia. He tells us of the first exploit of Gilbert, when a mere boy, in connection with comic literature. Henry Mayhew was his com-

panion in the adventure, which was to start a journal called *The Cerberus*. The joint capital of these young gentlemen, we are told, consisted of about three pounds, and on the strength of this as present payment, and a lien upon the proceeds of the publication; an appreciating and enterprising printer was induced to set up the first number, which certainly displayed very considerable satirical power. Unfortunately—or fortunately, according to opinion—the proof of the first number was found by Mr. à Beckett's father, who, like the father of Mr. Mayhew, was a solicitor. That gentleman declared that, in the four columns, there were about forty-three distinct and separate libels; and, seeing the printer's name at the foot, he at once posted off to remonstrate with him. The upshot was that the printer was so terrified at the prospect of consequences, that he consented to abandon his bargain and turn the dangerous matter into "pie," upon having his bill paid in full. The

disgust of Gilbert at this summary check upon his aspirations was so violent, that, accompanied by his friend Mayhew, he left the paternal roof. With about fifteen shillings between them, the two friends found their way to Edinburgh, walking the whole distance—in the hope of being able to make a small fortune as authors, actors, or both, at the local theatre, of which Edward Mayhew was at that time the lessee. Edward Mayhew, however, informed them that it was not worth his while to pay for their plays when he could get those of Shakspeare for nothing ; and as the company, consisting of about twenty persons, was a sharing one, and occasionally had not above five-and-twenty shillings to share, an addition to the division was not to be thought of. So back, says their brother, came the two poor lads, as steerage passengers in a Leith smack, their passage-money being paid by brother Ned, who supplemented his bounty by a good strong pair of boots apiece, the walk to

Edinburgh having worn out the neat thin-soled wellingtons with which they set forth. From that time, it is added, Gilbert maintained himself by his pen. Mr. T. T. à Beckett, after some particulars with regard to Gilbert's adventure of *Figaro in London*, notices his connection with *Punch*. "I recollect well," he says, "my brother—who wrote for it from the first number to the last that appeared in his lifetime—bringing me away from my office on an assurance that if I accompanied him as far as the Strand, he would show me something that would fill me at once with gratification and amazement. He kept me in suspense until I reached Catherine-street, when he stopped short, and said, 'Now you shall see me draw a pound from *Punch*, and if that don't amaze you and gratify you, you must have but a poor sense of the marvellous, and very little brotherly sympathy.' *Punch* at that time was very weak and ailing, and, indeed, it appeared at one time impossible

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to rear him, but fortunately some well-to-do individuals became interested in his welfare"—which brings Mr. T. T. à Beckett to the arrangement with Bradbury and Evans.

“Punch’s Guide to the Watering Places” was begun in October, 1841, and continued at rather irregular intervals until the subject became exhausted. These papers were commenced by Mr. Wills, already referred to, who was afterwards sub-editor of the *Daily News*, and after that the acting editor of *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, under Mr. Dickens. Mr. Wills visited the places which he was deputed to describe, in order to obtain immediate impressions. His travelling expenses were paid by the proprietors, but not apparently upon a very lavish estimate; for one of the Whitefriars firm is recorded to have told him, in the course of his instructions, “Go to any expense you think necessary, and the

office will pay—if *you want a shilling fly, have a shilling fly.*” This, apparently, was the Whitefriars idea of liberality at the time—the firm had not yet learned the habit of large expenditure which was not long afterwards taught them by the *Daily News*. Douglas Jerrold and Horace Mayhew were among the other writers who contributed to the series.

Mark Lemon at this time was writing such pleasantries as “Songs for the Sentimental”—he was always humorous, neat, and artistic. Albert Smith commenced with the second volume, in January, 1842, his “Physiology of London Evening Parties,” which was illustrated by Newman, though Leech by this time was contributing sketches every week, and bidding for the foremost place, which he soon obtained. Albert Smith, also about this time, supplemented his “Medical Student” papers with a few others, called “Curiosities of Medical Experience.”

He also, we believe, wrote "The Natural History of Courtship," and certainly "The Physiology of the London Idler," which were illustrated by Leech.

In the first number of the third volume (July, 1842) Douglas Jerrold commenced "Punch's Letters to his Son," already referred to. Another series begun about the same time was called "Miss Tickletohy's Lectures on English History." They were not so effective as some of the other continuous papers, and were not extended to a very great length. "The Story of a Feather," by Douglas Jerrold, gave considerable impetus to the fourth volume; and concurrently with Jerrold's beautiful tale, which deserved all its popularity, appeared Albert Smith's "Side Scenes of Society." The latter was not so happy as some of the author's previous efforts, but was sufficient to keep up the reputation of *Punch* in his peculiar de-

partment, that of social satire from a surface point of view. About the same time à Beckett began "Punch's Heathen Mythology;" and in his miscellaneous columns the jester gave much amusement to his readers by his hits at the fashionable reports in the *Morning Post*, whose author he personified by the creation of the celebrated "Jenkins," of whom Leech made immense fun in his caricatures. Lord Brougham was a great subject at the same period, or thereabouts, and Leech made a speciality of his version of his lordship's *personnel*. One of the happiest hits at Brougham was a caricature by Leech, illustrative of Brougham's temporary (Brougham's ebullitions were always temporary) subservience to the Duke of Wellington. It represented Wellington as the riding-master at Astley's—the immortal Widdicomb who obtained a place in Mr. Briefless's ministry—and Brougham as the clown in the same celebrated circus. Brougham is represented as say-

ing to Wellington, "Well, Mr. Wellington, is there anything I can do for you—for to run, for to fetch, for to carry, for to beg, for to borrow, for to steal?" This general proffer of service so happily hit the political situation at the time, that London was in a state of delight. Sir James Graham, as "Peel's Dirty Little Boy," who was always getting into a mess, was another favourite in political caricature, published in one of the early volumes.

"Punch's Labours of Hercules," by Percival Leigh, was another series of the period which lasted for a considerable time. It was an effective satire, but not so attractive as "The Comic Blackstone," in which à Beckett gave a humorous version of English law. It was said that à Beckett, who certainly was not a profound lawyer, never read the *Commentaries* until he made it his business to burlesque them; but his comic points are not without their

value, and the work has perhaps been of some use to legal students of a light turn of mind.

About this time *Punch*, in the exuberance of his animal spirits, and stimulated by the consciousness of success, hit right and left at subjects for satire, and did not spare individuals by any means. The Jenkins joke was kept up with great spirit, and other newspapers besides the *Morning Post* were remorselessly lampooned. The *Morning Herald* and the *Standard*—the morning and evening representatives of the Conservative party—suffered to any extent. *Punch* chose to call them old women, and christened the one “Mrs. Gamp,” giving to the other the name of “Mrs. Harris.” The journals in question were then on the thoroughly unpopular side; for the Free Traders were in the ascendant, and the public were not prepared, as they are in these days, to be enlightened as to the mistakes of the

Manchester school. So the two old women with their large bonnets and pattens were accepted as the embodiment of Tory opinions—forsaken by Peel, who had popularised the other side—and the old standing jest has endured almost to the present time.

Lord John Russell was a favourite subject for fun in the early days of *Punch*, but the jester was seldom disrespectful to his lordship, except sometimes in pictorial caricature. He might be represented as a page-boy, receiving his dismissal from his mistress, in the person of Her Majesty, as “not strong enough for the place,” and so forth; but he was not often treated with utter contempt, and was an exception, therefore, to a great many people in the days when *Punch* was a more potent personage than he is now. The late Prince Consort was a frequent object of satire, especially in his military character. The jokes about “the Albert hat” for the

army were worked to any extent, and when the Prince was made a Field-Marshal the sarcasms were unsparing. It was after this rather excessive piece of promotion, it may be remembered, that the Duke of Wellington never omitted to use the prefix "F. M." in describing himself epistolarily. Sir Peter Laurie was also a favourite butt, and his expressed determination to "put down" a great many things, including suicide, was recurred to again and again. The changes were rung considerably in those days upon Lord William Lennox's literary pretensions, and his lordship's supposed indebtedness to other people for his ideas; and even the chiefs of letters, like Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton, did not escape sarcasm on account of certain idiosyncrasies; but the *Punch* writers appear to have been reconciled to his present lordship after a time, and absolved him from the common lot. The severest attack upon Lord Lytton that was ever published in *Punch* was not written by

any of the regular writers. It came from a contributor who then appeared in its columns for the first and last time—no less a person than Alfred Tennyson, since Poet-Laureate. The author of *The New Timon, a Romance of London*, had alluded to the poetry of Tennyson as

“A quaint farrago of absurd conceits
Out-babying Wordsworth and out-glittering
Keats.”

To this Tennyson replied in a few verses which made not a little impression at the time, and are still well remembered by many, beginning—

“We knew him out of Shakspeare’s art,
By those fine curses which he spoke,”

and continuing in a strain of personal sarcasm which we will not repeat in this place. The lines were signed “Alcibiades.” Not the least curious fact concerning them is that they were brought to the editor

of *Punch* by a particular friend of the attacked and the attacking party—a gentleman holding a considerable position in the world of letters, and noted for his personal influence among literary men and publishers.

Mr. Silk Buckingham was another target for the shafts of *Punch*. The jokes about the “British and Foreign Institute,” or “Destitute,” as the Whitefriars wits chose to call the institution, were well calculated to make the unreflecting laugh and the judicious, perhaps, grieve—but the judicious are always doing that. For Mr. Buckingham had done some service in his time, and deserved better treatment. He replied in a pamphlet, successfully vindicating his claims to the credit of an honourable and useful career; but he did not point his reply in a more personal way, and so attracted less attention than another victim to be presently mentioned, whom *Punch* drove to bay. Mr. Samuel

Carter Hall, the editor of the *Art Journal*, was a sufferer, at about the same time, by being treated as "fair game" from a strictly sporting point of view. Mr. Harrison Ainsworth—then far more prominently before the public than he has been of late years—was also a mark. Some of the hits were fair enough. For it is open to question how far Mr. Ainsworth, with the most amiable views of men and things, and the best of intentions towards society, did good by his romantic illustrations of the careers of highwaymen and burglars. But poor Mr. Ainsworth could not have his portrait painted without calling forth pleasantry, his good looks being made the occasion for equally good jokes.

We forget whether it was in reference to Prince Albert or Mr. Ainsworth that there appeared in *Punch* the delineation of the back of a gentleman's head, with the inscription, "The only way remaining to

paint the portrait of ——," the Prince or the novelist, as the case may be.

But this kind of thing was harmless enough, and the public—never very severe moralists as regards satire, except in the persons of those individually concerned—would not have had *Punch* better behaved on any account. So *Punch*, potentially supported, went its ways and did not care for anybody. But it must be said for the jester that he did not depend for his influence upon writing of this class. The stern—though humorous, and at times tenderly playful—satire of Douglas Jerrold gave perhaps the predominating character to the periodical, in the moral sense of the term. Gilbert à Beckett enlivened it with his wonderful facility for fun, and the clear sound sense which gave value to his vagaries, even when most extreme. Albert Smith, as we have seen, made the outside of things more amusing than it could be made by more potent satirists among his

contemporaries. It is curious, by the way, how utterly Albert Smith's writings have disappeared from the ken of the reading public.

Mark Lemon wrote little himself, but he was the cause of a great deal of writing in others. What he wrote was always to the point—humorous, sensible, and to a good purpose. But he was a proper editor. He did not aspire to shine too much himself; his province was to regulate the shining of others—to bring out their lights, and provide even the occasional dash of shade desirable for discretion or effect. To Mark Lemon's management of the several "ingredients of *Punch*"—not always so harmonious upon paper as in the bowl—must be ascribed not a little of the success of the periodical. Mr. Leigh, one of the oldest, was always one of the safest of contributors. His separate works are an assurance of his powers of wit and humour; and although he was never a pro-

lific writer, some of *Punch's* best hits have proceeded from his pen. He has always shown a marked feeling for art, never wrote in a slipshod way, and, whatever he was not, was always neat; and his old qualities, we are glad to know, are still as good as new, and foremost in the familiar pages.

Of Horace Mayhew, who seems idle in these days, we have already spoken. He and Percival Leigh are the only men of the early contributors who are still at their posts. Death has removed Douglas Jerrold, Gilbert à Beckett, Thackeray—to whom we have not yet referred—John Leech, and Mark Lemon. Even the proprietors have died out. Mr. Last still thrives, but Bradbury and Evans have both gone. Henry Mayhew is still engaged in the field of his renown, but he has never returned to his *premières amours* in the pages of *Punch*. Albert Smith, who did not agree personally with some

of his colleagues, left the periodical many years before his death. He wrote, indeed, only in a few of the early volumes.

It was not to be supposed that the original contributors—apart from the chance of what are called “natural causes,” common to all of us—could support the pages of *Punch*. To the publication came from time to time new men, who, if not always equal to the old, have maintained its character, and—in one instance at least—did a great deal more. Mr. Thackeray was an accession in 1844, when *Punch* had established a wonderful reputation, and was the talk of society to an extent that it ceased to be even in Thackeray’s day. He began with a few careless sketches “From our Fat Contributor,” contributed from Brighton, we think, in the first place, and continued from Egypt when on the tour which had its literary result in the “Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo.” *Punch* was still engaged in making all the

fun it could out of Lord William Lennox, Mr. Silk Buckingham, Monsieur Jullien, Alfred Bunn—we shall have a word to say about Alfred Bunn presently—Mr. Carter Hall, Daniel O'Connell, Alderman Moon, and others, when Thackeray—who seems to have been drawn towards the circle by a certain law of gravitation—appeared first in its pages. On his return from the East, in 1845, he became a regular contributor. Gilbert à Beckett about this time was beginning the "Comic History of England," and Douglas Jerrold was deep in the immortal Mrs. Caudle. Thomas Hood contributed occasionally, but not perhaps his best things, with the glorious exception, however, of "The Song of the Shirt." It is difficult to say where that noble poem has *not* been printed since, but it first appeared in the pages of *Punch*.

1845—the year of the railway mania—saw the production of a representative

man of the period, the immortal "Jeames of Buckley Square." The ballad bearing this name, with which Mr. Thackeray introduced the character, was a very happy hit at the mania for speculation which pervaded all classes at this time; and it had such an unexpected success that its author was easily induced to follow up the subject. Accordingly "Jeames" was made the prominent person of the drama, and his diary—which ran for so many weeks afterwards in the journal—was one of Thackeray's most humorous efforts.

Coventry Patmore seems a very unlikely person to have written in *Punch*. But the author of *The Angel in the House* made one contribution—we believe only one—to its columns. It was entitled "Vive la Guerre," and consisted of some effective verses upon the affair of General Pelissier and the Arabs at Dahra, which caused so much scandal in Europe at the

time. It was Douglas Jerrold who procured the insertion of the poem. Detesting war as he did, even when fairly conducted, he was sure to sympathise with a denunciation of an act of cruelty such as that which stained the reputation of the future Duke of Malakoff. Laman Blanchard had a short connection with *Punch* in the previous year. His contributions, however, were but few. The best of them, perhaps, were some charming lines about the marriage and retirement from the stage of Mrs. Nisbett, which conclude with a prophecy afterwards fulfilled :—

“A thousand to one we shall see her again.”

In 1846 appeared “The Snobs of England, by One of Themselves,” by Thackeray, it need scarcely be said. Everybody knows *The Book of Snobs* in its completed form, and can fancy, if they do not remember, the effect produced by

these courageously candid pictures upon society and the public.

Meanwhile *Punch* was making great advances in its art. John Leech had developed wonderfully, having worked hard, and carefully cultivated his natural ability. Those who knew him only through results would never suspect how painstaking he was, nor the patience with which he would manipulate the most free, and apparently the most easy, of his sketches. It would be difficult to trace in his more mature works the illustrator of *The Adventures of Mr. Ledbury and his friend Jack Johnson*, or even the delineator of the page-full of heads of Continental counts and cads already referred to under the name of Foreign Affairs, which was his first contribution to *Punch*.

But besides the development of Leech there was an equally great event in the discovery of Doyle. Richard Doyle is

the son of the once famous "H. B." who, in the pre-comic journal period of history, drew political caricatures for the print-sellers. "H. B." made admirable hits at times, and was thought an unaccountably clever fellow. But the son transcended his father's fame, and deserved to do so. He had a higher artistic culture than had often been employed for purposes of caricature, had the graces of the schools, but was as humorous in his way as Leech himself.

It was unfortunate that the delineator of "Manners and Customs of ye Englyshe," his most popular series in *Punch*, should have parted company with the periodical. But his secession was inevitable. There came a time when there was a protest in this country against what was called Papal aggression. *Punch* went with the stream, which carried ministers to repressive measures, and was guilty of much fun at the expense of the Pope.

Doyle, as a member of the Church of his Holiness, had conscientious scruples about the connection, which he there and then dissolved, amidst a chorus of respectful regrets.

The illustrated cover to the weekly numbers of *Punch* is, we need scarcely say, from the pencil of Doyle. It has been unchanged for many years, perhaps through regard for its merits and for the character of the artist; but we believe that there are also considerations in which copyright is concerned that render it prudent to preserve a permanent design for this distinguishing feature of the publication.

Mr. Punch, as we have seen, carried on much as he pleased during the period of his greatest success and influence, which nobody need be told is a far earlier period than the present. He was unfair at times, as we have also seen; but the public had

fairly spoiled him, and any errors were excused in consideration of his engaging vivacity and his right-mindedness when really serious matters were concerned. But he occasionally met with ridicule and even reproach at the hands of contemporaries in the same field. Angus Reach, assisted by Albert Smith and Shirley Brooks, certainly did not go out of their way to be civil to him in *The Man in the Moon*.

But the hardest hit *Punch* ever received was from Alfred Bunn, in 1847. Mr. Bunn had endured a great deal of ridicule for years past, as a manager and a man, and particularly as a poet. The "Blazes of Triumph" announced in his bills were somewhat bombastic, it must be confessed; his personal appearance was irresistibly tempting to a caricaturist; and his poetry, perhaps, abused the privilege which operatic poetry has of being inane, though it must be admitted that such songs as "I dreamt that I dwelt in marble

halls," "When other lips and other hearts," "The light of other days," &c., go more smoothly to music than some more pretentious performances. Between one weakness and another "the Poet Bunn" had no peace; his life was made a burden to him. But suddenly he remembered that who would be free themselves must strike the blow, and very shortly afterwards there appeared a certain work, called *A Word with Punch*. It was so like *Punch* in appearance that you might have mistaken it for that publication. There was a caricature of the cover outside, and the temporary illusion was increased by the prominence given to the name of "Punch" in the title, the words "A Word with" being placed in comparative obscurity in a line above. The size of the page was of course the same, and so was the form of the columns. The text was interspersed with illustrations, as in the original, and the general ap-

pearance was as like as like could be, even to the extent of the proverbial two peas.

What shall we say of the nature of the contents? Albert Smith used to declare that when a man attacked him in the papers he always found the best course to be "to drag him out by name, and say all you know against him." This was precisely the policy adopted by Mr. Bunn in the "Word with Punch." He dragged out all the recognised writers of that periodical, and said all that he knew against them. There was not much to say, it must be confessed. But if a writer of any power of expression sits down with the deliberate intention of insulting somebody else upon paper, it is strange if he does not succeed; and when the persons selected for special and studied insult happen to have established antagonistic relations with a large number of other persons, it is strange if the said writer

does not find considerable acceptance for his benevolent service. Both results came to pass in the case of Mr. Bunn. And the effect was heightened by caricatures in which the originals were portrayed with as many ludicrous or otherwise unpleasing associations as an effective artist of cheerful disposition could well bring together. There was no great harm done. The motive alleged for the attacks upon "Hot Cross Bunn," as he was called in turn with the title of "Poet," was no worse than having been refused boxes at Drury Lane Theatre—the probable fact being that there was no motive at all, except "the fun of the thing." But the thing was intended to annoy, and doubtless did ; and Mr. Bunn had this excuse for an unscrupulous pro-lusion, that he met the writers on their own field, and fought them with their own weapons—less fairly employed he might have added—but it was not for him to point out this little difference. The precedent is an awkward one in the interests of satire,

and would interfere, if generally followed, with some of the most cherished privileges of comic writing. It would have been far better for Mr. Bunn to have considered the greatest happiness of the greatest number, instead of poisoning his personal prejudices against the pleasure afforded to the public by his maintenance of the character of a tranquil target, to say nothing of the development of sarcastic power of which he was the occasion. But Mr. Bunn was not a hero, not even a philosopher, and we must suppose him excusable for taking a selfish view of the case.

We should not omit to add that the *Word with Punch* was noted as "No. I. To be continued if necessary." Also that No. II. never appeared, not being necessary—for *Punch* never bored Mr. Bunn afterwards. Both sides agreed to be better enemies—an arrangement less dangerous than being better friends, since it

saves the chance of a fresh misunderstanding.

Mr. Bunn, by the way, is said not to have been his own champion upon the occasion. The greater part, if not the whole, of the fight—both with pen and pencil—is supposed to have been conducted by a distinguished man of letters who is to this day going gaily about London, and evincing no sign of repentance. He did his gladiating doubtless without malice, and from a purely sporting instinct—even as Mr. Punch gave the provocation.

Another notable incident in the life of Mr. Punch was the production of his pantomime at Covent Garden Theatre. Punch had become so popular that a strong personal interest was attached to him. A "*Punch* writer" at a festive assembly was a lion. Out-of-doors all kinds of things were named after Punch—restaurants,

wine, snuff, pickles, and what not—and somebody having suggested that “Punch’s Pantomime” ought to “draw” well, the writers of that periodical were engaged by the Covent Garden management to write the best pantomime in the world. The subject selected was *King John*; or, *Harlequin and Magna Charta*. It was completed in due time, and Mr. Lemon read the MS. to the manager and company at the theatre. It gave—as we are told by a gentleman concerned in the representation—great satisfaction at the time to all but the pantomimists—that is to say, the people who do the “comic business” after the transformation. The fact was, it possessed a fault not uncommon when special persons are engaged to produce pieces of the kind which are out of their peculiar vocation. It had a great deal of wit but very little fun; and Mr. W. H. Payne, who played King John in the introduction in as preposterous a helmet as his fondest hopes could have conceived, found himself

considerably thrown upon his own resources when the "comic business" began. However, these defects were remedied, and the pantomime was found to be not so very clever as to be cut off from a fair share of success, though it was not quite the conquering hero that was expected from the prestige of its authors.

Towards 1848 Douglas Jerrold's hand began to be less prominent in *Punch* than it had been heretofore. He was writing plays, editing a magazine, and 'then a newspaper of his own; and after that, in 1852, he commenced the editorship of *Lloyd's*, which he continued until his death early in 1857. This was the first great blow that death had dealt to the popular journal, and Jerrold's place could not be supplied. Some of his best and most popular writings were contributed to its columns, and so long as he lived he could not fail to be in the foremost rank of its writers. His son, Mr. Blanchard Jerrold,

in the memoir published soon after his father's death, has so completely traced his course in the periodical as to make further details unnecessary in this place.

Meanwhile Mr. Tom Taylor and Mr. Shirley Brooks had joined the staff of *Punch*, and introduced some new elements of popularity. The taste and versatility of these writers could not fail to give increased attraction to the columns of the jester, though they appealed to a somewhat different public from that which *Punch* addressed in his early days, especially in his earliest, when Henry Mayhew was a leading influence. The man-about-town, the man of theatres, the man of taverns, was by this time comparatively little represented in the journal. Thackeray imparted something of the old tone; but he was of the club, clubby, and occupied higher conventional ground. Percival Leigh still wrote in the ancient spirit, and so did à Beckett, though both, insensibly,

became modified as they grew older, more thoughtful, and more responsible. But à Beckett still gave us glimpses of Mr. Briefless and even of Mr. Dunup, and showed to the last that he had no wish to cure himself of comic writing, and that he relished a joke, for its own sake, as keenly as during his great march to Edinburgh with Henry Mayhew, or when performing what he considered a feat, in drawing a sovereign from the young and struggling periodical. But à Beckett followed Jerrold after no very long interval, and then there was another great loss to *Punch*. However, Thackeray was writing for the jester with undiminished vigour, though engaged upon the great works which so largely occupied him in his latter years. The "Travels in London" and the imitations of the novelists, among other things, illumined the pages of his pet periodical, which he never forsook so long as he put pen to paper. But he went the way of all men in his turn ; and then John Leech followed him, and

.

of late years Tom Taylor and Shirley Brooks have had much mournful work in writing memorials upon their colleagues. Only the other day Mark Lemon was included among those who have "gone before." Mr. Bradbury had preceded him, and now Mr. Evans has followed.

The old band has broken up, but the work of the world must still be done; and others, who are of such long standing as to be associated at least with *some* of the best days of *Punch*, keep him yet in public favour. Mr. Brooks has succeeded Mr. Lemon as the editor, and if his instincts are not favourable to the creation of new elements of success, he will at least support the character and traditions of the journal. New elements of fun and fancy must, of course, be in action among contributors, and of these the principal representative is Mr. Frank Burnand. His "Happy Thoughts"—whether expressed under their original heading or

not—are always contagious to a large class of readers ; and since à Beckett there has been no man who so thoroughly enjoyed, and made others enjoy, the sheer wantonness of humour. His is a prodigality of point—purpose he leaves to take care of itself. He makes no pretensions to pointing morals, but he adorns tales with recognised success. He is at least gay, and the quality of gaiety has been neglected of late years in light and airy literature. A cynical tone, a moralising tone, a preaching tone, has crept into comic writing ; and the gaiety of Mr. Burnand, though scarcely the gaiety of wit, of epigram, nor essentially of scholarship, is always welcome in the pages of *Punch*. The journal has, on the whole, well maintained its character ; it has still some very pleasant features, though its complexion has not generally the youthful glow that it had.

But there is still a youthful deportment in *Punch*, and its artists draw in a manner

that nobody dreamt of in its early days. Mr. Tenniel, who succeeded Mr. Doyle in its higher pictorial flights, has established the connection between high art and caricature ; Mr. Du Maurier and Mr. Charles Keene are thoroughly educated artists, and develop continual new ideas upon social subjects. Other men have more or less shared with them the honours of the wood. We hear, too, of occasional literary contributors from time to time ; but they have not been many in number, and their contributions do not appear to have attracted much attention.

While alluding to occasional contributors of an earlier date, we omitted to mention Mr. Sutherland Edwards and Mr. James Hannay. Mr. Edwards, when a very young man, set up a satirical journal, called *Pasquin*, which was far too juvenile in tone to become a pecuniary success, but was distinguished by such high ability as to attract the attention of

Gilbert à Beckett and Mark Lemon, and the result was that after the punctual disappearance of *Pasquin* Mr. Edwards became an occasional contributor to *Punch*. The admission of a youthful rival into their field was not, however, relished by the "Punch men" generally, and Mr. Edwards's connection with the periodical lasted but a few weeks.

Mr. James Hannay—now Her Majesty's Consul at Barcelona—joined a few years afterwards, through the influence of Mr. Thackeray. His first contributions were some notes made during a tour in his native Scotland, which, he tells us, in his "Sketches in Ultra-Marine," he quitted, with precocious sagacity, at an early age; and their author is described as "The Scotchman who went back again." He added not a little to the liveliness of the periodical for a year or two afterwards. But the connection was not quite a congenial one. The author of *Singleton*

Fontenoy was growing tired of fun for its own sake, and it is probable that he was not sufficiently encouraged by the directors of the journal to take a prominent place in its pages and develop his individuality. So, after a shorter time than was to the advantage of *Punch* Mr. Hannay's co-operation came to an end.

There have been a few anonymous contributions from time to time to the pages of *Punch*. The regular staff were naturally disinclined to the admission of aid from outside; and it was only just that they should be allowed to garrison the post which they had themselves taken and fortified. It is mere nonsense to talk about jealousy prompting the "exclusion of talent" in such cases; and no amount of cleverness can give a claim to share success which has been already made. Accordingly, the additions to the staff have been admitted only by degrees and under special circumstances; and it is no

business of the writers of *Punch* if other men could be found capable of carrying it on with more advantage to the public.

It is notable, by the way, that one of the most frequently-quoted hits—made many years ago—came from an anonymous volunteer, whose identity has never been avowed to this day. It was not a long article. It could not well have been shorter, indeed, for it consisted but of a single word in addition to the heading. This recommendation enables us to quote it entire, which we do below for the satisfaction of our readers, to whom, however, it is not likely to be new :—

“ADVICE TO PERSONS ABOUT TO MARRY—Don’t.”

It is not, however, probable that *Punch* has gained much from anonymous correspondents. Anybody who has ever conducted a periodical of any kind—and more especially one of a light and humorous description—knows how little

the examination of strange communications repays the trouble. For one mute inglorious Milton—even in a mild way—who may be discovered by the means, there are a thousand noisy and pretentious donkeys who would make the editor's life a burden to him if he ever gave them a second thought.

Other literary contributors must, in the natural course of things, be added to *Punch's* list from time to time; so, between the old connection and the new, under its present editorship, it will be strange indeed if *Punch* (the first successful comic journal in this country, the English version of the French *Charivari*, which it was said, on account of the natural dulness of our people, would never be acclimatised) does not flourish for many years to come. But there is this difference between French and English periodicals of the comic class:—In France there is a floating population of men-

about-town, who can of themselves keep a periodical going. In England there is no such thing. An English *Charivari* must address itself to a certain extent to politics in their popular bearings, but it must also make itself read, and trusted, in domestic life. Mark Lemon was well aware of this fact; and under his influence *Punch* fell into a social groove from which he has never deviated. He appeals considerably to out-of-door politicians, but his principal influence is in domestic life. His tone is healthy and genial (we use a couple of hackneyed words, because they force themselves upon us); he does not appeal to the masses in the usual acceptance of the term; he even ventures to be Conservative upon occasion; he addresses himself to a few people who think, to a great many who read, and to a great many more who are willing to be taught. Long may he flourish! And if he never does worse than he has done, Mr. Punch will decidedly have done good in his generation.

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"(Signed)

" War Office, August 1st, 1870.

J. W. M.,

Assistant Commissary-General.

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[SEE NEXT

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